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Letter dated 3 February 2015 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the Security Council is scheduled to hold an open debate on "Maintenance of international peace and security: reflect on history, reaffirm the strong commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations" on Monday, 23 February 2015. A concept note, prepared to inform the discussion, is attached (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex to the letter dated 3 February 2015 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note

Maintenance of international peace and security: reflect on history, reaffirm the strong commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the victory won in the world war against fascism. The United Nations, born out of the ashes of the Second World War, is the result of humankind's long struggle for peace and development. It is the living manifestation of the lofty aspiration: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind" and "to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours". It also reflects the international community's common ideal of maintaining peace and security and promoting economic development. As the most universal, representative and authoritative intergovernmental international organization, the United Nations has endured many trials and undertaken an extraordinary journey, playing a key role in maintaining world peace, promoting common development and advancing international cooperation.

During its presidency of the Security Council in February 2015, China proposes to hold an open debate on "Maintenance of international peace and security: reflecting on history and reaffirming our strong commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations". Its reasons for holding this open debate are the following.

Since the founding of the United Nations 70 years ago, the world has gone through profound and complex changes. Nevertheless, the global trend toward multipolarity and the process of economic globalization remain unchanged, as does the fact that peace and development are the two underlying themes of our time. Humanity now faces an unprecedented historical opportunity and the future for development is increasingly bright. The important principles established by the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for State sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of international disputes and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, together make up the foundation of contemporary international law and international relations. They are also the core elements that must be upheld through the international rule of law. History has repeatedly proven that these principles, if upheld and promoted, will be a blessing for humankind, while any attempt to deviate from or deny them will cause endless trouble. Member States should reflect fully on the background to the founding of the United Nations with a view to better cherishing and maintaining peace together in the future. There will be hope for peace only when the scourge of war is not forgotten. Member States should reaffirm their strong commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as well as the basic norms governing international relations. At the same time, they should commit themselves to the noble cause of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international equity and justice, and should undertake never to go to war again. The international community

should advocate the concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, promote a new model of international relations based on win-win cooperation, and work together to build a harmonious world of enduring peace, universal security and common prosperity.

We hope that this open debate will serve as an important opportunity for Member States to reaffirm their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, create a suitable atmosphere for the United Nations to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the victory won in the war against fascism, and launch the relevant commemoration process. We suggest that the open debate focus on the following aspects:

- We should conscientiously maintain the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter provides a firm foundation for the truly universal application of international law to all countries and the advancement of the international rule of law. All countries should review the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, abide by the commitment to maintain peace and the rule of law, and persevere in advancing the international rule of law and international equity and justice.

- We should persevere in upholding the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs. Sovereignty is the fundamental symbol of a country's independence, and it is also the embodiment and reliable guarantee of national interests. The sovereign independence and territorial integrity of States must not be infringed upon. Countries, big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are all equal members of the international community, and they are all entitled to participate in international affairs on an equal footing. Countries' internal affairs should be managed by their own peoples. Member States should respect each other's core interests and major concerns as well as the social system and development path chosen by countries themselves. The Security Council, when deploying United Nations peacekeeping operations and carrying out post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, should respect the leading role of the countries involved and pay attention to their concerns.

- We should commit ourselves to the peaceful settlement of international disputes. The international community should be committed to resolving differences and disputes between countries peacefully, through dialogue and consultation. The Security Council should earnestly advocate peaceful solutions to disputes and support, as a matter of priority, the efforts of the countries involved and regional organizations to resolve disputes through dialogue, negotiation, reconciliation, good offices and other peaceful means. Before exercising its right to make a recommendation under Chapter VI of the Charter, the Security Council should fully consider whether that is helpful to the ongoing efforts for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Security Council should be cautious with regard to the use of coercive measures, and should strictly ensure that such measures are taken only when international peace and security is under real threat.

- We should uphold democracy and the rule of law in international relations. Member States should abide by international law and universally recognized basic principles governing international relations. They should distinguish right from wrong and promote peace and development with universally

applicable rules. We should all uphold the authority and sanctity of international law and international order. All countries must exercise their rights in accordance with law and reject any attempt to distort international law. Equal and democratic participation must be upheld in the establishment of international rules. In particular, small and medium-sized developing countries, which make up the majority of the membership of the United Nations, should participate on an equal footing in the establishment of international rules related to peace and security.

- We should pursue common development and win-win cooperation. The foundation of common security is the development and prosperity of all countries. While pursuing its own development, every country should also work for the development of others, so that a greater number of people in all countries can benefit more from the gains of development. Win-win cooperation should be a basic policy goal for Member States in dealing with international affairs. Member States should align their domestic interests with the common interests of all countries, and strive to expand the convergence of interests among them. We should always act in unity, shoulder common responsibilities and tackle global challenges together.